

Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

----- 113655

O 241830Z SEP 76 ZFF-4

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6968

USDEL SECRETARY NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 LAGOS 11014

NODIS

C H E R O K E E

FROM REINHARDT

E. O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: OVIP (REINHARDT JOHN A.)

SUBJ: REINHARDT TRAVEL

1. SUMMARY: IN NINETY MINUTE MEETING WITH GENERAL OBASANJO I REVIEWED COURSE OF SECRETARY'S INITIATIVES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, FOLLOWING OUTLINES OF TALKING POINTS. OBASANJO EXPRESSED APPRECIATION THAT FMG BRIEFED, SAID HE "LESS HOPEFUL" THAN I, BUT DELIGHTED USG "FINALLY" INTERESTED PROBLEMS OF AFRICA. ON RHODESIA: OBASANJO WILL BELIEVE IT WHEN HE SEES IT, THINGS FRONT-LINE PRESIDENTS CAN BRING NATIONALISTS TOGETHER, WARNS AGAINST "A STOOGES" COMING TO POWER, SEES NEED FOR ECONOMIC STABILITY IF MAJORITY RULE ATTAINED, AND HOPES FOR AMERICAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN GUARANTEES THAT A DEVIOUS SMITH WILL ABIDE BY AGREEMENTS. ON NAMIBIA: STRESSED HARD LINE THAT ONLY NEED IS IMPLEMENTATION OF UN RESOLUTIONS BUT ACCEPTS REALITY SOUTH AFRICA NOW PRESENT AND NOT MOVABLE BY RESOLUTIONS. DOMINANT THEME OF OBASANJO REMARKS WAS NEED FOR USG AND SOUTH AFRICA TO STAY THE COURSE. MADE FINAL PITCH FOR FUTURE AMERICAN EFFORTS AGAINST APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA.

2. AT OUTSET OF VERY CORDIAL MEETING I STRESSED SECRETARY'S WISH TO KEEP FMG INFORMED AND DESIRE TO HAVE FMG COUNSEL AS WE
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PROCEED TO SEEK SOLUTION TO COMPLEX SOUTHERN AFRICAN PROBLEMS.

POINTED OUT THAT ALL OF SECRETARY'S DISCUSSIONS FULLY TOOK INTO ACCOUNT VIEWS OF FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS, THAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE, THE FIRST CONCRETE PUBLIC INDICATION OF WHICH WILL BE SMITH SPEECH A FEW HOURS HENCE. THEN REVIEWED ACHIEVEMENTS OF PAST TWO WEEKS IN ACCORDANCE TALKING POINTS.

3. OBASANJO FIRST GENTLY FEINTED THAT USG CURRENT INTEREST BETTER LATE THAN NEVER, BUT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE NO POSSIBILITY FOR PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF RHODESIAN AND NAMIBIAN PROBLEMS WITHOUT USG AND SA. HE SHOWED LITTLE INTEREST IN SUCH DETAILS AS INTERIM GOVERNMENT, CONSTITUTION, CONFERENCE SITES, ENABLING LEGISLATION, OR ANY MECHANISM FOR ACHIEVING MAJORITY RULE. HE CONTINUALLY EMPHASIZED HIS BELIEF THAT USG AND SA MUST BE "TOTALLY COMMITTED" LEST SMITH SLIP FROM THE NET ONCE MORE. "YOU MUST PROVIDE GUARANTEES," HE SAID. SEEMED SATISFIED WHEN TOLD THAT ALL PREVIOUS SMITH SLIPPERINESS IN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT CONTEXT WITHOUT COMMITMENTS TO USG AND SA.

4. HE MADE THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC POINTS ABOUT RHODESIA:

(1) IF REPEAT IF THE PROPOSALS WHICH I OUTLINED "PROVED REAL," HE THOUGHT THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS COULD BRING THE ADMITTEDLY FRACTIOUS NATIONALIST GROUPS TOGETHER: "I SEE NO NEED TO FIGHT IF YOU CAN GET WHAT YOU WANT WITHOUT FIGHTING."

(2) HE FELT COMPELLED TO TELL ME THAT "MANY OF US" FEAR THAT AN AMERICAN STOOGE WILL BE SET UP IN SALISBURY. IN REPLY I STRESSED THAT WE HAVE NO CANDIDATES, THAT BLACKS AND WHITES MUST FIND THEIR OWN REPRESENTATIVES FOR AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT, AND THAT THE SECRETARY'S ONLY OBJECTIVE DURING THE PAST TWO WEEKS WAS TO FIND MECHANISMS FOR THE TRANSFER OF POWER. (3) HE DID NOT SEE HOW THE LIBERATION ARMIES CAN AFFORD TO LAY DOWN ARMS WITHOUT "GUARANTEES." I BALKED ONCE MORE ABOUT "GUARANTEES," POINTING OUT THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO "GUARANTEE" AGAINST AN ABSTRACTION AND THAT IF ONE FOLLOWED HIS REASONING, WE MIGHT FIND A BLACK LIBERATION FORCE FIGHTING AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT WITH A BLACK PRIME MINISTER.

5. OBASANJO'S FIRST RESPONSE ABOUT NAMIBIA WAS THE SIMPLISTIC ONE THAT HE SAW NOTHING TO DISCUSS: THE UN HAD MADE CLEAR THAT SA IS ILLEGALLY PRESENT AND SHOULD HAVE BEEN OUT BY AUGUST 31, 1976. I REPLIED THAT THE FMG, THE USG, AND THE UN
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WERE IN AGREEMENT ABOUT LEGALITIES BUT THAT NO UN RESOLUTION WOULD REMOVE THE REALITY OF THE SA PRESENCE. MAJOR PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE WITH SA PARTICIPATION. I ASKED IF HE THOUGHT TWO MONTHS AGO SA WOULD HAVE AGREED TO BE PRESENT EVEN IN THE SAME CITY WITH SWAPO. HE THOUGH NOT BUT WAS STILL WORRIED THAT UN RESOLUTIONS WERE BEING VIOLATED.

6. HE THEN MOVED ON SOMEWHAT MORE REALISTICALLY. HE

WONDERED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN WHEN THE SECRETARY AND NUJOMO MEET AND THE LATTER MAKES NEW DEMANDS. I REQUESTED THAT HE BE SPECIFIC. WELL, NUJOMO MAY WANT RELEASES FOR SWAPO PRISONERS HELD BY SA. I FIRST POINTED OUT THAT THE SEEMINGLY UNATTAINABLE HAD BEEN ATTAINED: CHANGE IN VENUE OF THE WINDHOEK CONFERENCE, A UN ROLE, AN INVITATION TO SWAPO. THESE FORMERLY FIERCELY OPPOSED CONCESSIONS WERE NOT EASILY AGREED TO BY SA, AND I JUST DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE SA REACTION WOULD BE IF SWAPO UPPED THE ANTE. HE PERSISTED: HAD WE NEVER HEARD THAT SWAPO WANTED ITS MEN RELEASED? I ACKNOWLEDGED THAT WE HAD BUT STATED THAT I DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE SAG WOULD DO.

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6969

USDEL SECRETARY NIACT IMMEDIATE

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FROM REINHARDT

7. OBASANJO THEN STATED THAT I HAD REFERRED TO "A UN ROLE." THE UN ALREADY HAD A ROLE WITH MR. MCBRIDE. IN THE LIGHT OF ALREADY PASSED UN RESOLUTIONS ALL THAT IS NECESSARY IS THAT MCBRIDE SHOULD ASSUME CONTROL AND TRANSFER IT TO SWAPO. (OBASANJO DID NOT EVEN SMILE AS HE PUT FORTH THIS PROPOSAL.) I MADE THE OBVIOUS ANSWER THAT SA PRESENCE IS A REALITY IN NAMIBIA AND THAT I DID NOT THINK EVEN HE BELIEVED THAT MCBRIDE WOULD REMOVE SA.

8. AS AN AFTERTHOUGHT OBASANJO RETURNED TO SUBJECT OF RHODESIA TO INQUIRE ABOUT ECONOMIC PROPOSALS WHICH HE HAD SEEN REPORTED IN THE PRESS. I TOLD HIM THAT THERE HAS BEEN

CONSIDERABLE LOOSE WRITING ON THIS SUBJECT, THAT THERE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSIONS BUT NOT FIRM DECISIONS. THE DISCUSSIONS HAVE DEALT WITH THE NEED FOR ECONOMIC STABILITY AFTER MAJORITY RULE IS ACHIEVED. THERE ARE NO PLANS TO BAIL OUT WHITES, AS HE MAY HAVE ASSUMED FROM HIS READING, BUT THERE IS AN INTEREST IN INSURING THAT WHITES WILL NOT FLEE THE COUNTRY WITH CAPITAL AND SKILLS. HE INTERPOSED NO OBJECTIONS AND, INDEED, ENDORSED ANY PLAN THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE ECONOMIC SECURITY OF ZIMBABWE.

9. FINALLY, OBASANJO WONDERED WHAT THE SECRETARY WAS
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PREPARED TO DO ABOUT APARTHEID. I STATED THAT IF HE HAD READ THE BOSTON AND PHILADELPHIA SPEECHES AS WELL AS REPLIES TO NUMEROUS QUESTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT, HE COULD HAVE NO DOUBT CONCERNING THE USG'S VIEWS. HOWEVER, FROM THE OUTSET THE SECRETARY HAD STATED THAT HE WAS COMING TO AFRICA, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS, TO SEEK A BASIS FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA. SA HOLDS VERY HIGH CARDS. DID HE THINK THAT WE COULD SEEK CONCESSIONS FROM SA AT THE SAME TIME WE ATTACKED THEM? HE AGREED THAT WE COULD NOT BUT DID NOT WANT US TO FORGET THAT THE USG MUST PLAY A FUTURE ROLE IN "GAINING HUMAN DIGNITY" IN SA.

10. WE AGREED THAT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE FMG AND USG MUST CONTINUE, THAT HE WILL BE KEPT INFORMED, AND THAT HIS COUNSEL IS VALUED.

11. COMMENT: THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT OBASANJO IS GRATEFUL FOR THE BRIEFING. HE SIMPLY WANTS TO KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON BUT IS UNCERTAIN HOW HE CAN BRING HIS OLIGARCHY ALONG IN SEEKING CLOSER CONSULTATION.

12. IN THIS CONVERSATION HE WAS PROCEEDING BY INTUITION. REFERENCES TO THE STOOGES AND THE NEED FOR "GUARANTEES," ON THE ONE HAND, AND TO NATIONALIST PARTICIPATION AND NOT FIGHTING FOR THAT WHICH IS PRESENTED, ON THE OTHER HAND, REPRESENT HIS FEEL FOR THE SUBJECT AND NOT THE PRECISION OF REFLECTION. HE HAS DOUBTS, EVEN THAT SMITH WILL TAKE THE FIRST NEEDED STEP, MUCH LESS THAT LATER PROBLEMS ARE SOLVABLE. STILL, HE IS WILLING TO WAIT AND SEE AND LATER TO ACKNOWLEDGE THERE WAS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE POWER AND PRESTIGE OF THE USG, PROVIDED THAT MAJORITY RULE IS ATTAINED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERIM GOVERNMENT, INDEPENDENCE, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, APARTHEID, MEETING REPORTS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, CAT-C, CHEROKEE 09/24/76
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LAGOS11014
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P840084-0361, N760007-0288
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760924/aaaaatys.tel
Line Count: 219
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 JUL 2004 by ullricre>; APPROVED <18 OCT 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REINHARDT TRAVEL
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, PDEV, RH, WA, SF, NI, US, (REINHARDT, JOHN E), (OBASANJO, OLUSEGUN)
To: STATE SECRETARY SS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006